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Now it is in evidence from an entirely different source that prior to the spring of 1734—over four years before Verendrye visited the Mandans—a Frenchman had visited the Aricaras at their upper Missouri villages, that fact being evidenced by "a letter from Bienville, dated April 22nd, 1734, stating that a Frenchman, having lived several years among the Pawnees, had ascended the Missouri river to the Ricaras, who had never before seen a Frenchman." That letter is taken from Margry, Vol. 6, page 455. See the Appendatory Note to Part I of this paper in Vol. 3, S. D. Hist. Coll., page 586, which note refers to Vol. 9, Kas. Hist. Coll. for 1905-6, as the source of the information. From all of which, and the information imparted to Verendrye by the Mandans, it would seem that communication, however imperfect and irregular, between the whites below and the Indians as far up as the Aricara villages of the Missouri, had already been established when that intrepid explorer made his first memorable visit to the Mandans. Whether the advent of the Frenchman at the Aricara villages had anything to do with the commencement of that war between those Indians and the Mandans which he was told had then raged "for four years," and prior to which, according to further information given him, the Pawnees (Aricaras) and the Mandans "had always from all time been closely united and in alliance together"—may never be determinable by competent evidence; but as the dawn of the fur trade of the upper Missouri was not to appear for some fifty years then yet to come, it is safe to declare that fur traffic or its incidents in rivalries and overreachings among the whites had nothing to do with this first breach between the tribes in question. Verendrye's record concerning the long duration of peace and alliance between the upper Missouri Pawnees and the Mandans at that early date is significant as indicating that the Mandans had then long been in those quarters. And that the Pananas "made their forts like them" (i. e., the Mandans) is also indicative of a long period of mutual experience in housebuilding by both tribes in that general locality. And it seems highly probable that such resemblance in the character of habitations is less likely to have been occasioned by the proximity of the two tribes brought about through a southwestward approach to the Missouri by the Mandans and an up-river progress by the Aricaras, than to have followed a mutual progress up-river. And when we further consider that all of the formidable village defenses of both tribes were, according to information recorded

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by Verendrye, such as brought him to conclude that "they may be called impregnable to Indians," there would seem to be made out at least a presumptive case of mutual defense by Mandans and Aricaras against enemies from below—including the dreaded Sioux—rather than against those from the north; in other words, that such formidable earthworks as are thus recorded, including in at least one case a ditch "upwards of fifteen feet deep by fifteen to eighteen feet wide," reinforced by "ramparts very level and broad, the palisade supported on cross pieces mortised into posts of fifteen feet," were probably the climax of the efforts of years to ward off a strong, persistent and generally successful foe who had driven both tribes up the Missouri.

From Agnes C. Laut's "Pathfinders of the West" (Macmillan Co., 1904) we quote the following extract relating to the second contact of the Verendryes (sons of him who headed the expedition of 1738) with the Mandans in 1742. The account is set forth in the spirited phrases indicative of movement and inspiration, for which that gifted author is famous:

"The two men left among the Mandans to learn the language had returned to the Assiniboine river with more news of tribes from the "setting sun" who dwelt on salt water. Pierre de la Verendrye went down to the Missouri with the two interpreters, but the Mandans refused to supply guides that year and the young Frenchman came back to winter on the Assiniboine. Here he made every preparation for another attempt to find the Western Sea by way of the Missouri. On April 29th, 1742, the two brothers, Pierre and Francois, left the Assiniboine with the two interpreters. Their course led along the trail that for two hundred years was to be a famous highway between the Missouri and Hudson Bay. Leading southwest, they followed the Souris river to the watershed of the Missouri, and in three weeks were once more the guests of the smoky Mandan lodges. Round the inside walls of each circular hut ran berth beds of buffalo skins with trophies of the chase, hide shields and weapons of war, fastened to the posts that separate berth from berth. A common fire, with a family meat pot hanging above, occupied the center of the lodge. In one of these lodges the two brothers and their men were sheltered. The summer passed feasting with the Mandans and smoking the calumet of peace; but all was in vain. The Missouri Indians were arrant cowards in the matter of war. The terror

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764 length was pronounced by his brother, in which he impressed on their minds, the great importance which the deceased man had been to their nation; rehearsed his war exploits, and concluded by urging all to follow his example, and to become of equal usefulness to their tribe. Then they would be sure of following and becoming companions of him, and all the other great warriors, which had died before, in the world of spirits. After this address was closed, provisions were brought out, consisting of boiled dog's flesh, of which the company just tasted, and then a bowl full of it was presented to the dead man. He was then taken up by four men and carried outside of the village, just into the edge of the woods, and placed on a stage which had been previously erected, about ten feet high. The bowl of food was brought and set by his head, and his arms and accoutrements laid by his side. In this manner their dead are deposited, and are never buried. The wife and relations of the deceased made the most violent and dreadful howlings, tearing their hair and appearing to be in the deepest anguish, under the loss they had sustained."

142 **Complexion, Etc.** "The Mandans and the Gros Ventres are of the lightest complexion, and largest Indians on the Missouri. Their hair inclines to a chestnut color, and in some instances has a slight curl; it is never so lank and course as most other Indians. Their eyes are full and lively, their cheek bones rather high, and their countenances open and agreeable. The Gros Ventres have
291 more of a fierce, savage look, than the Mandans who are courteous and sociable in their behavior. They are neat in their dress, which is similar to that of the Rus, except that they decorate it with
253 white rabbit, and white ermine skins. Many of their lodges, or huts, are decorated in a beatiful manner; having the inside lined with the richest furs, such as the lynx, beaver, otter, white rabbit, martin, fox, mountain cat and white ermine, sewed together like patch-work, which gives them a rich and beautiful appearance. The lodge of the head chief was sixty feet in diameter, elegantly lined with furs, and the seats, which are also used as beds, were covered with the grizzly bear and buffalo skins. These people
439 keep their lodges and buildings in a state of great neatness. They cultivate the same kind of produce with the Rus, and carry on a trade with the roving Indians, who occasionally visit them. The
● 648 Mandans and Gros Ventres live in great friendship, although

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they speak different languages; and it is necessary they should, for their villages are not more than six miles apart. The Mandans speak the same tongue of the Osage, but have a different accent, and dialect. They were once a numerous, war-like people, but have been reduced by the smallpox, and by their enemies, the Sioux, to less than four hundred warriors." (Pages 180 to 183 LeRaye's journal.)

After having tarried eight days with the Mandans, LeRaye and his Indian escorts left there, arriving on the 13th July, 1802, at the Gros Ventre village "on the lower side of the Batteau (Knife) river," called the Meniture village. Another village, called Meni-tar-u-miti-ha-tah, is situated on the upper side of the Batteau river. These villages are larger than the Mandans, built in the same manner, and containing about 600 warriors, and about 2500 inhabitants. They were formerly more numerous, but the smallpox has made its ravages among them. These people deposit their dead in the same manner as the Mandans, but at a greater distance from their villages."

Marriage Ceremony. Here LeRaye gives interesting particulars of an Indian marriage ceremony at the last mentioned village: "Proclamation was made, by one of the relations, that on the next day, in the morning, the marriage would be celebrated." The next morning "The company assembled at her father's lodge, where the chief of the village attended. He informed the company, that the young man, calling him by name, intended to take the girl, calling her by name, to be his wife. He then asked each of them if that were their intention, which each of them answered in the affirmative. The chief then handed them a small rod, which was broken between them. The groom then broke his part into a number of small pieces, and handed them to the men who stood near to him. The bride did the same with her part of the rod, which consummated the marriage. Fire was then brought, and the sacred pipe was lighted. After all the men had smoked in it, the dance commenced, which was continued for several hours." Down to the point of smoking, the foregoing seems to have been strikingly similar to the usual civilized marriage ceremony of those times.

Rocky Mountain Hunt. After a feast on July 2nd, 1802, the Indians, still holding LeRaye, and accompanied by Pardo, set out on the fall hunt to the Yellowstone and the Rocky mountains;

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of them remained all night. We sent in the evening three young Indians with a present of tobacco for the chiefs of the three upper villages, inviting them to come down in the morning to a council with us.

Minnetarees and Ahnahaways. "Accordingly, the next day, Sunday, October 28, we were joined by many of the Minnetarees and Ahnahaways from above but the wind was so violent from the southwest that the chiefs of the lower villages could not come up, and the council was deferred till tomorrow. In the meantime we entertained our visitors by showing them what was new to them in the boat; all which, as well as our black servant, they called Great Medicine, the meaning of which we afterwards learnt. We also consulted the grand chief of the Mandans, Black Cat and Mr. Jesseaume, as to the names, characters, etc., of the chiefs with whom we are to hold the council. In the course of the day we received several presents from the women, consisting of corn, boiled hominy, and garden stuffs; in our turn we gratified the wife of the great chief with a gift of a glazed earthen jar. Our hunter brought us two beavers. In the afternoon we sent the Minnetarees chiefs to smoke for us with the great chief of the Mandans, and told them we would speak in the morning. Finding that we shall be obliged to pass the winter at this place, we went up the river about one and a half mile to-day with a view of finding a convenient spot for a fort, but the timber was too scarce and small for our purposes.

First Indian Council. "Monday, October 29th. The morning was fine and we prepared our presents and speech for the council. After breakfast we were visited by an old chief of the Ahnahaways, who finding himself growing old and weak, had transferred his power to his son, who is now at war against the Shoshonees. At ten o'clock the chiefs were all assembled under an awning of our sails, stretched so as to exclude the wind which had become high. That the impression might be the more forceable, the men were all paraded, and the council opened by a discharge from the swivel of the boat. We then delivered a speech, which like those we had already made, intermingled advice with assurances of friendship and trade; while we were speaking the old Ahnahaway chief grew very restless, and observed that he could not wait so long, as his camp was exposed to the

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hostilities of the Shoshonees. He was instantly rebuked with great dignity by one of the chiefs for this violation of decorum at such a moment, and remained quiet during the rest of the council. Towards the end of our speech we introduced the subject of our Ricara chief, with whom we recommended a firm peace. To this they seemed well disposed, and all smoked with him very amicably. We all mentioned the goods which had been taken from the Frenchman, and expressed a wish that they should be restored. This being over, we proceeded to distribute the presents with great ceremony. One chief of each town was acknowledged by a gift of a flag, a medal with the likeness of the president of the United States, a uniform coat, hat and feather; to the second chiefs we gave a medal representing some animals, and a loom for weaving; to the third chiefs, medals with the impressions of a farmer sowing grain. A variety of other presents were distributed but none seemed to give them more satisfaction than an iron corn-mill which we gave to the Mandans.

"The chiefs who were made today are: Shahaka or Big White, a first chief, and Kagohami or Little Raven, a second chief of the lower village of the Mandans, called Matootonha. The other chiefs of an inferior quality who were recommended were: 1. Ohheenaw, or Big Man, a Cheyenne taken prisoner by the Mandans who adopted him, and he now enjoys great consideration among the tribe. 2. Shotahawrora, or coal, of the second Mandan village, which is called Rooptahee. We made Poscopsahe, or Black Cat, the first chief of the village, and the grand chief of the whole Mandan nation; his second chief is Kagonomokshe, or raven man chief; inferior chiefs of this village were Tawnoheo and Bellahsara, of which we did not learn the translation." (id 161)

Big White. "Tuesday, 30. We were this morning visited by the two persons from the lower village, one the Big White, the chief of the village, the other the Cheyenne called the Big Man. They had been hunting, and did not return yesterday early enough to attend the council. At their request we repeated part of our speech of yesterday, and put the medal round the neck of the chief. Captain Clarke took a perioque and went up the river in search of a good wintering place, and returned after going seven miles to the lower point of an island on the north side,

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about one mile in length, he found the banks on the north side high with coal occasionally, and the country fine on all sides, but the want of wood and the scarcity of game up the river, induced us to decide on fixing ourselves lower down during the winter. In the evening our men danced among themselves to the great amusement of the Indians. 622 648

Mandan's Speech. "Wednesday, 31st. A second chief arrived this morning with an invitation from the grand chief of the Mandans, to come to his village where he wished to present some corn to us and speak with us. Captain Clarke walked down to his village. He was first seated with great ceremony on a robe by the side of the chief, who then threw over his shoulders another robe handsomely ornamented. The pipe was then smoked with several of the old men who were seated around the chief. After some time he began his discourse by observing that he believe what we had told him, and that they should soon enjoy peace, which would gratify him as well as his people, because they could then hunt without fear of being attacked, and the women might work in the fields without looking every moment for the enemy, and at night put off their moccasins, a phrase by which is conveyed the idea of security, when the women could undress at night without fear of attack. 622 648 537

"As to the Ricaras, he continued, in order to show you that we wish peace with all men, that chief, pointing to his second chief, will go with some warriors back to the Ricaras with their chief now here and smoke with that nation. When we heard of your coming, all the nations around returned from their hunting to see you, in hopes of receiving large presents. All were disappointed and some discontented. For his part he was not much so, though his village was. He added that he would go and see his great father, the president. Two of the steel traps stolen from the Frenchman were then laid before Captain Clarke, and the women brought about twelve bushels of corn. After the chief had finished, Captain Clarke made an answer to the speech and then he returned to the boat, where he found the chief of the third village and Kagohami (the Little Raven) who smoked and talked about half an hour. After they left the boat the grand chief of the Mandans came dressed in the clothes we had given him, with 622 648

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622 648 his two children, and begged to see the men dance, in which they willingly gratified him."(id 168)

Peace With the Aricaras. "Thursday, November 1st. At ten o'clock the chiefs of the lower village arrived. They requested that we would call at their village for some corn; that they were willing to make peace with the Ricaras; that they had never provoked the war between them, but as the Ricaras killed some of their chiefs, they had retaliated on them; that they had killed them like birds, till they were tired of killing them, so that they would send a chief and some warriors to smoke with them. In the evening we dropped down to the lower village, where Captain Lewis went on shore, and Captain Clarke proceeded to a point of wood on the **north side.**

"Friday, November 2. He therefore went up to the village, where eleven bushels of corn were presented to him. In the meantime Captain Clarke went down with the boat three miles, and having found a good position where there was plenty of timber, encamped and began to fell trees to build our huts. Our Ricara chief set out with one Mandan chief and several Minnitarees and Mandan warriors; the wind was from the southeast, and the weather being fine, crowds of Indians came down to visit us." (id 169)

224 **Mandan Hunt.** "Monday, 5th. The Indians are all out on their hunting parties. A camp of Mandans caught within two days one hundred goats a short distance below us. Their mode of hunting them is to form a large strong pen or fold, from which a fence made of bushes gradually widens on each side. The animals are surrounded by the hunters and gently driven towards this pen, in which they imperceptibly find themselves inclosed, and are then at the mercy of the hunters." (id 170.)

231 "Thursday, 8. The morning again cloudy; our huts advanced very well, and we are visited by numbers of Indians who come to let their horses graze near us. In the day the horses are let loose in quest of grass, in the night they are collected and receive an armful of small boughs of the cottonwood, which being very juicy, soft and brittle, form nutritious and agreeable food." (id 171.)

000 **Northern Indians.** "Wednesday, 14th. The river rose last night half an inch, and is now filled with floating ice. This morning was

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cloudy with some snow. About seventy lodges of Assiniboines and some Knistenaux are at the Mandan village, and this being the day of adoption and exchange of property between them all, it is accompanied by a dance, which prevents our seeing more than two Indians today. These Knistenaux are a band of Chippeways whose language they speak. They live on the Assiniboine and Saskashawan rivers, and are about two hundred and forty men." (id 173)

Hostilities With Assiniboines and Knistenauxs. "Sunday, November 18. Today we had a cold windy morning. The Black Cat came to see us, and occupied us for a long time with questions on the usages of our country. He mentioned that a council had been held yesterday to deliberate on the state of their affairs. It seemed that not long ago, a party of Sioux fell in with some horses belonging to the Minnetarees, and carried them off; but in their flight they were met by some of the Assiniboines, who killed the Sioux and kept the horses. A Frenchman, too, who had lived many years among the Mandans, was lately killed on his route to the British factory on the Assiniboine. Some smaller differences existed between the two nations, all of which being discussed, the council decided that they would not resent the recent insults from the Assiniboines and Knistenaux, until they had seen whether we had deceived them or not in our promises of furnishing them with arms and ammunition. They had been disappointed in their hopes of receiving them from Mr. Evans, and were afraid that we too, like him, might tell them what was not true. We advised them to continue at peace, that supplies of every kind would no doubt arrive for them, but that time was necessary to organize the trade. The fact is, that the Assiniboines treat the Mandans as the Sioux do the Ricaras; by their vicinity to the British they get all the supplies, which they withhold or give at pleasure to the remoter Indians. The consequence is, that however badly treated, the Mandans and Ricaras are very slow to retaliate, lest they should lose their trade altogether." (id 175.)

Fort Mandan. "Tuesday, 20th. We this day moved into our huts, which are now completed. This place, which we call Ft. Mandan, is situated in a point of low ground, on the north side of the Missouri, covered with tall and heavy cottonwood. The works consist of two rows of huts or sheds, forming an angle

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where they join each other. Each row contains four rooms, of fourteen feet square, and seven feet high, with plank ceiling, and the roof slanting so as to form a loft above the rooms, the highest part of which is eighteen feet from the ground. The backs of the huts form a wall of that height, and opposite the angle the place of the wall was supplied by picketing. In the area were two rooms for stores and provisions. The latitude by observation is 47 degrees, 21 minutes, 47 seconds, and the computed distance from the mouth of the Missouri, sixteen hundred miles." (id 176)

Sioux Threats. "In the course of the day several Indians came down to partake of our fresh meat; among the rest, three chiefs of the second Mandan village. They inform us that the Sioux on the Missouri above the Cheyenne river, threaten to attack them this winter; that these Sioux are much irritated at the Ricaras for having made peace through our means with the Mandans, and have lately ill-treated three Ricaras who carried the pipe of peace to them, by beating them and taking away their horses. We gave them assurances that we would protect them from all their enemies." (id 176)

Mandan Villages and Tribe. "The villages near which we are established are five in number, and are the residence of three distinct nations—the Mandans, the Ahnahaways and the Minnetarees. The history of the Mandans, as we received it from our interpreters and from the chiefs themselves, and as it is attested by existing monuments, illustrates, more than that of any other nation, the unsteady movements and the tottering fortunes of the American nations. Within the recollection of living witnesses, the Mandans were settled forty years ago in nine villages, the ruins of which we passed about eighty miles below, and situated seven on the west and two on the east side of the Missouri. The two finding themselves wasting away before the smallpox and the Sioux, united into one village, and moved up the river opposite to the Ricaras. The same causes reduced the remaining seven to five villages, till at length they emigrated in a body to the Ricaras nation, where they formed themselves into two villages, and joined those of their countrymen who had gone before them. In their new residence they were still insecure, and at length the three villages ascended the Missouri to their present position. The two

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increased by the strength of the fort, and the circumstances of our interpreters having both removed there with their families. These reports we did not fail to disprove to their entire satisfaction, and amused them with every attention, particularly by the dancing of the men, which diverted them highly. All the Indians whom Captain Lewis had visited were very well disposed, and received him with great kindness, except a principal chief of one of the upper villages, named Mahpahpaparapassatoo, or Horned Weasel, who made use of the civilized indecorum of refusing to be seen, and when Captain Lewis called, he was told the chief was not at home. In the course of the day seven of the Northwest company's traders arrived from the Assiniboine river, and one of their interpreters having undertaken to circulate among the Indians unfavorable reports, it became necessary to warn them of the consequences, if they did not desist from such proceedings. The river fell two inches today and the weather became very cold."

No British Flag. "About eight o'clock Poscopsahe came down to visit us, with some warriors; we gave them presents and entertained them with all that might amuse their curiosity, and at parting we told them that we had heard of the British trader, Mr. Laroche, having attempted to distribute medals and flags among them; but that those emblems could not be received from any other than the American nation, without incurring the displeasures of the great father, the president. They left us much pleased with their treatment." (id 182.)

Sioux Raid. "Friday, 30th. About eight o'clock an Indian came to the opposite bank of the river, calling out that he had something important to communicate, and on sending for him, he told us that five Mandans had been met about eight leagues to the southwest by a party of Sioux, who had killed one of them, wounded two, and taken nine horses; that four of the Wattasoons were missing, and that the Mandans expected an attack. We thought this an excellent opportunity to discountenance the injurious reports against us, and to fix the waivering confidence of the nation. Captain Clarke therefore instantly crossed the river with twenty-three men strongly armed, and circling the town, approached it from behind. His unexpected appearance surprised and alarmed the chiefs, who came out to meet him, and

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conducted him to the village. He then told them that having heard of the outrage just committed, he had come to assist his dutiful children; and that if they would assemble their warriors and those of the nation, he would lead them against the Sioux and avenge the blood of their countrymen. After some minutes' conversation, Ohenaw, the Cheyenne arose: 'We now see,' said he, 'that what you have told us is true, since as soon as our enemies threatened to attack us you come to protect us and are ready to chastise those who have spilled our blood. We did indeed listen to your good talk, for when you told us that the other nations were inclined to peace with us, we went out carelessly in small parties, and some have been killed by the Sioux and Ricaras. But I knew that the Ricaras were liars, and I told their chief who accompanied you, that his whole nation were liars and bad men; that we had several times made a peace with them, which they were the first to break; that whenever we pleased we might shoot them like buffalo, but that we had no wish to kill them; that we would not suffer them to kill us, nor steal our horses; and that although we agree to make peace with them, because our two fathers desired it, yet we did not believe that they would be faithful long. Such, father, was my language to them in your presence, and you see that instead of listening to your good counsel they have spilt our blood. A few days ago, two Ricaras came here and told us that two of their villages were making moccasins, that the Sioux were stirring them up against us, and that we ought to take care of our horses; yet these very Ricaras we sent home as soon as the news reached us today, lest our people should kill them in the first moments of grief for their murdered relatives. Four of the Wattasoons whom we expected back in sixteen days have been absent twenty-four, and we fear have fallen. But, father, the snow is now deep, the weather cold, and our horses cannot travel through the plains; the murderers have gone off; if you will conduct us in the spring time, when the snow has disappeared, we will assemble all the surrounding warriors, and follow you.'"

Clarke Counsels Peace. "Captain Clarke replied, that we were always willing and able to defend them; that he was sorry that the snow prevented their marching to meet the Sioux, since he wished to show them that the warriors of their great father would

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chastise the enemies of his obedient children who opened their ears to his advise; that if some Ricaras had joined the Sioux, they should remember that there were some bad men in every nation, and that they should not be offended at the Ricaras till they saw whether these ill-disposed men were countenanced by the whole tribe; that the Sioux possessed great influence over the Ricaras, whom they supplied with military stores, and sometimes led them estray, because they were afraid to oppose them; but that this should be the less offensive, since the Mandans themselves were under the same apprehensions from the Assiniboines and Kristenaux, and that while they were thus dependent, both the Ricaras and Mandans ought to keep on terms with their powerful neighbors, whom they may afterwards set at defiance, when we shall supply them with arms, and take them under our protection.

"After two hours conversation Captain Clarke left the village. The chief repeatedly thanked him for the fatherly protection he had given them, observing that the whole village had been weeping all night and day for the brave young men who had been slain, but now they would wipe their eyes and weep no more as they saw that their father would protect them. He then crossed the river on the ice and returned on the north side of the fort." (id 184.)

Cheyenne Delegation. "Saturday, December 1st. The wind was from the northwest, and the whole party engaged in picketing the fort. About ten o'clock the half-brother of the man who had been killed, came to inform us that six Sharhas, or Cheyenne Indians, had arrived, bringing a pipe of peace, and that their nation was three days' march behind them. Three Pawnees had accompanied the Sharhas, and the Mandans being afraid of the Sharhas on account of their being at peace with the Sioux, wished to put both them and the three Pawnees to death; but the chiefs had forbidden it, as it would be contrary to our wishes. We gave him a present of tobacco, and although from his connection with the sufferer, he was more embittered against the Pawnees than any other Mandan, yet he seemed perfectly satisfied with our pacific counsels and advise. The Mandans we observed called all the Ricaras by the name of Pawnee; the name of Ricaras being that by which the nation distinguished itself."

"Sunday, December 2nd. At eleven o'clock, the chiefs of the

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lower village brought down four of the Sharhas. We explained to them our intentions, and advised them to remain at peace with each other; we also gave them a flag, some tobacco, and a speech for their nation. These were accompanied by a letter to Messrs. Tabeau and Gravelines at the Ricara village, requesting them to preserve peace if possible, and to declare the part which we should be forced to take if the Ricaras and Sioux made war on those whom we had adopted. After distributing a few presents to the Sharhas and Mandans, and showing them our curiosities, we dismissed them, apparently well pleased at their reception." (id 187.)

Mandan Religion—Origin. "Tuesday, 4th. Oscapsaee and two young chiefs passed the day with us. The whole religion of the Mandans consists in the belief of one great spirit presiding over their destinies. This being must be in the nature of a good genius, since it is associated with the healing art, and the great spirit is synonymous with the great medicine, a name also applied to every thing which they do not understand. Each individual selects for himself the particular object of his devotion, which is termed his medicine, and is either some invisible being or more commonly some animal, which henceforward becomes his protector or his intercessor with the great spirit; to propitiate whom every attention is lavished, and every personal consideration is sacrificed. 'I was lately owner of seventeen horses,' said a Mandan to us one day, 'but I have offered them all up to my medicine, and am now poor.' He had in reality taken all his wealth, his horses, into the plain, and turning them loose, committed them to the care of his medicine, and abandoned them forever. The horses, less religious, took care of themselves, and the pious votary traveled home on foot. Their belief in a future state is connected with this tradition of their origin; the whole nation resided in one large village under ground, near a subterraneous lake; a grape vine extended its roots down to their habitation, and gave them a view of the light; some of the most adventurous climbed up the vine, and were delighted with the sight of the earth, which they found covered with buffalo and rich with every kind of fruits; returning with the grapes they had gathered, their countrymen were so pleased with the taste of them that the whole nation resolved to leave their dull residence for the charms

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The Assiniboines, too, are at war with the Mandans. They have in consequence, prohibited the Northwestern Company from trading to the Missouri, and even killed two of their traders near the Mouse river, and are now lying in wait for Mr. M'Kenzie of the Northwestern Company, who had been for a long time among the Minnetarees. These appearances are rather unfavorable to the project of carrying some of the chiefs to the United States; but we still hope, that by effecting a peace between the Mandans, Minnetarees and Ricaras, the views of our government may be accomplished." (id 350)

"Thursday, 14th.[9] We again set out at sunrise, and at length approached the grand village[10] of the Minnetarees, where the natives had collected to view us as we passed. We fired the blunderbuss several times by way of salute, and soon after landed at the bank near the village of the Mahahas, or Shoe Indians and were received by a crowd of people, who came to welcome our return."

Re-Arrival at Mandan Villages. "Among these were the principal chief of the Mahahas, and the chief of the Little Minnetaree village, both of whom expressed great pleasure at seeing us again, but the latter wept most bitterly. On inquiry, it appeared that his tears were excited, because the sight of us reminded him of his son who had been lately killed by the Blackfoot Indians. After remaining there a few minutes, we crossed to the Mandan village of the Black Cat, where all the inhabitants seemed very much pleased at seeing us. We immediately sent Chaboneau with an invitation for the Minnetarees to visit us, and dispatched Drewyer to the lower village of the Mandans to bring Jesseaume as an interpreter."

Black Cat. "Captain Clarke in the meantime walked up to the village of the Black Cat, and smoked and ate with the chief. This village has been rebuilt since our departure, and was now much smaller; a quarrel having arisen among the Indians, in consequence of which a number of families had removed to the opposite side of the river. On the arrival of Jesseaume, Captain Clarke addressed the chiefs. We spoke to them now, he said, in the same language we had done before; and then repeated his invitation to accompany him to the United States, to hear in person the counsels of their great father, who can at all times protect those who open their ears to his counsels, and punish his enemies. The

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● 648 Black Cat, in reply, declared that he wished to visit the United States, and see his great father, but was afraid of the Sioux, who had killed several of the Mandans since our departure, and who were now on the river below, and would intercept him if he attempted to go. Captain Clarke endeavored to quiet his apprehensions by assuring him that he would not suffer the Sioux to injure one of our red children who should accompany us, and that they should return loaded with presents, and protected at the expense of the United States. The council was then broken up, after which we crossed and formed our camp on the other side of the river, where we should be sheltered from the rain. Soon after the chief of the Mahahas informed us that if we would send to his village, we should have some corn. Three men were therefore dispatched, and soon after returned loaded with as much as they could carry, and were soon followed by the chief and his wife, to whom we presented a few needles and other articles fit for women. In a short time the Borgne (the great chief of all the Minnetarees) came down, attended by several other chiefs, to whom after smoking a pipe, Captain Clarke now made an harangue, renewing his assurances of friendship and the invitation to go with us to Washington. He was answered by the Borgne, who began by declaring that he much desired to visit his great father, but that the Sioux would certainly kill any of the Mandans who should attempt to go down the river. They were bad people and would not listen to any advice. When he saw us last, we had told him that we had made peace with all the nations below, yet the Sioux had since killed eight of his tribe, and stolen a number of their horses. The Ricaras too had stolen their horses, and in the contest his people had killed two of the Ricaras. Yet in spite of these dispositions, he had always had his ears open to our counsels, and had actually made a peace with the Cheyennes and the Indians of the Rocky Mountains. He concluded by saying that however disposed they were to visit the United States, the fear of the Sioux would prevent them from going with us.[11] The counsel was then finished, and soon afterwards an invitation was received from the Black Cat, who, on Captain Clarke's arrival at his village, presented him with a dozen bushels of corn, which he said was a large proportion of what his people owned, and after smoking a pipe, declared that his people were too apprehensive

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of the Sioux to venture with us. Captain Clarke then spoke to the chiefs and warriors of the village. He told them of his anxiety that some of them should see their great father, and hear his good words and receive his gifts, and requested them to fix on some confidential chief who might accompany us. To this they made the same objections as before, till at length a young man offered to go, and the warriors all assented to it. But the character of his man was known to be bad, and one of the party with Captain Clarke informed him that at that moment he had in his possession a knife which he had stolen. Captain Clarke therefore told the chief of this theft, and ordered the knife to be given up. This was done with a poor apology for having it in his possession, and Captain Clarke then reproached the chiefs for wishing to send such a fellow to see and hear so distinguished a person as their great father. They all hung down their heads for some time, till the Black Cat apologized by saying that the danger was such that they were afraid of sending any of their chiefs, as they considered his loss almost inevitable. Captain Clarke remained some time with them, smoking and relating various particulars of his journey, and then left them to visit the second chief of the Mandans (or the Blackcrow) who had expressed some disposition to accompany us. He seemed well inclined to the journey, but was unwilling to decide till he had called a council of his people, which he intended to do in the afternoon. On returning to the camp, he found the chief of the Mahahas, and also the chief of the Little Minnetaree village, who brought a present of corn on their mules, of which they possess several, and which they procure from the Crow Indians, who either buy or steal them on the frontiers of the Spanish settlements. A great number of the Indians visited us for the purpose of renewing their acquaintance, or of exchanging robes or other articles for the skins brought by the men." (id 354)

Mandan Wars. "In the evening Chaboneau, who has been mingling with the Indians, and had learned what had taken place during their absence, informed us that as soon as we had left the Minnetarees, they sent out a war party against the Shoshonees, whom they attacked and routed, though in the engagement they lost two men, one of whom was the son of the chief of the Little Minnetaree village. Another war party had gone against

1: DeLand O-4 (No date)1908 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

721 the Ricaras, two of whom they killed. A misunderstanding, too, had taken place between the Mandans and the Minnetarees, in consequence of a dispute about a woman, which had nearly occasioned a war, but at length a pipe was presented by the Minnetarees, and a reconciliation took place."

•648 721 **Corn Abundant—Counseled Against Wars.** "Friday, 15th. The Mandans had offered to give us some corn, and on sending this morning, we found a greater quantity collected for our use than all our canoes would contain. We therefore thanked the chief and took only six loads. At ten o'clock the chiefs of the different villages came down to smoke with us. We therefore took this opportunity of endeavoring to engage the Borgne in our interests by a present of the swivel, which is no longer serviceable, as it cannot be discharged from our largest perioque. It was now loaded, and the chiefs being formed in a circle around it, Captain Clarke addressed them with great ceremony. He said that he had listened with much attention to what had yesterday been declared by the Borgne, whom he believed to be sincere, and then reproached them with their disregard of our counsels, and their wars on the Shoshonees and Ricaras. Little Cherry, the old Minnetaree chief, answered that they had long stayed at home and listened to our advice, but at last went to war against the Sioux, because their horses had been stolen, and their companions killed, and in an expedition against those people, they had met the Ricaras, who were on their way to strike them, and a battle ensued. But in future, he said, they would attend to our words and live in peace. But Borgne added that his ears, too, would always be open to the words of his good father, and shut against bad counsel. Captain Clarke then presented to the Borgne the swivel, which we told him had announced the words of his great father to all the nations we had seen, and which, whenever it was fired, should recall those which we had delivered to him. The gun was then discharged, and the Borgne had it conveyed in great pomp to his village. The counsel then adjourned."

000 **Big White Taken Past.** "In the afternoon, Captain Clarke walked up to the village of the Littlecrow, taking a flag, which he intended to present to him, but was surprised on being told by him that he had given over all intentions of accompanying us, and refused the flag. He found that this was occasioned by a

1: DeLand O-4 (No date)1908 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

ning down to the beach, who appeared very anxious to speak to us. We went ashore, and found it was the brother of the Big White, who was encamped at no great distance, and hearing of our departure, came to take leave of the chief.

"The Big White gave him a pair of leggins, and they separated in a most affectionate manner, and we then continued, though the wind and waves were still high. The Indian chief seemed quite satisfied with his treatment, and during the whole of his time was employed in pointing out the ancient monuments of the Mandans, or in relating their traditions. At length, after making forty miles, we encamped on the northeast side, opposite an old Mandan village, and below the mouth of Chesshetah river."[12] (id 364)

"Here follow some entries showing events on the return trip of Lewis & Clarke at and near the Aricara villages and which are found in Part I of this paper in Vol. 3, S. D. Hist. Call. pp. 400-1.

At the Aricaras Villages the Mandan Chief Thus Addressed the Rees. "The Big White, chief of the Mandans, now addressed them at some length, explaining the pacific intentions of his nation; and the Cheyenne observed that both the Ricaras and Mandans seemed to be in fault; but at the end of the council, the Mandan chief treated with great civility, and the greatest harmony prevailed among them." * * *

"Captain Clarke returned to the boats where he found the chief of the lower village, who had cut off part of his hair and disfigured himself in such a manner that we did not recognize him at first, until he explained that he was in mourning for his nephew, who had been killed by the Sioux. He proceeded with us to the village on the island, where we were met by all the inhabitants. The second chief, on seeing the Mandan, began to speak to him in a loud and threatening tone, till Captain Clarke declared that the Mandans had listened to our counsels, and that if any injury was done to the chief, we should defend him against every nation. He then invited the Mandans to his lodge, and after a very ceremonious smoking, assured Captain Clarke that the Mandan was as safe as at home, for the Ricaras had opened their ears to our counsels as well as the Mandans. This was repeated by the great chief, and the Mandan and Ricara chiefs now smoked and con-

1: DeLand O-4 (No date)1908 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

versed and great apparent harmony; after which we returned to the boats." (id 370) 648

"Friday, 22nd. While here we had occasion to notice that the Mandans, as well as the Minnetarees and Ricaras, kept their horses in the same lodges with themselves." (id 372)

Patrick Gass' observations on the Mandans, taken from his journal made while a member of the Lewis and Clarke expedition, will now be presented. Gass was a redoubtable Irishman of sound sense and keen observation. While much of what he records is largely a duplication of the Lewis and Clarke entries in substance, yet it will be found upon comparison of the two records that considerable additional information is contained in his journal. Some of his descriptions of Indians, situations and circumstances surrounding the sojourn with the Mandans and at Fort Mandan are striking, and constitute a substantial addition to the main journals. The original edition, published by Ells, Claflin & Co., Dayton (Ohio), in 1847, is here referred to. 114

Journal of Patrick Gass—Lewis and Clarke Expedition. (p. 56, et seq.) 000

"Wednesday, 24th, (October 1804). At twelve we came to a hunting party of the Mandan nation of Indians, and remained with them until 2 and then continued our voyage. There were three lodges of these Indians on an island, which has been cut off the Grand Bend, a short distance below the Mandan village. We encamped on the north side. Five of the Indians came to us, and our Indian went over with them and returned in the morning.

"Thursday, 25th. Passed a beautiful bottom on the south side, and hills on the north. A great many of the natives, some on horseback and some on foot appeared on the hills on the north side, hallooing and singing. At 2, we stopped for dinner, and as we could not get our boat to shore on the north side, the water being shallow, our Indian was sent over to them. In the afternoon we passed a bottom covered with timber on the north side and hills on the south, and encamped on the north side. Here our Indian returned accompanied by one of the Mandans.

"Friday, 26th. Passed a large willow bottom on the south and high land on the north side. The Mandan Indian left us early in the morning. At 10, we came to a hunting party of the Mandans,

1: DeLand O-4 (No date)1908 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

000 consisting of men, women and children. There was an Irishman with them, who had come from the Northwest Company of traders. We remained here an hour, and then proceeded. A number of the Indians kept along the shore opposite the boat all day, on the south side, on which side we encamped. Some of them remained with us to 12 at night and then returned to their village.

Mandan Village. "Saturday, 27th. At half past seven we arrived at the first village of the Mandans and halted about two hours. This village contains forty or fifty lodges built in the manner of those of the Rickarees. These Indians have better complexions than most other Indians, and some of the children have fair hair. We passed a bluff on the south side with a stratum of black resembling coal. There is a bottom on the north side, where the second Mandan village is situated. We went about a mile above it and encamped on the same bottom, for the purpose of holding a council with the natives. This place is 1,610 miles from the mouth of the river du Bois, where we first embarked to proceed on the expedition. There are about the same number of lodges and people in this village as in the first. These people do not bury their dead, but place the body on a scaffold, wrapped in a buffalo robe, where it lies exposed.

"Sunday, 28th. The day was clear and we remained here, but could not sit in council, the wind blew so violent.

Council. "Monday, 29th. We had again a clear day and some of the principal men came from each village of the Mandans, from the Watasoons, Sioux, and one from the Gros Ventres, and all sat in council together. At 11 o'clock, when the council met, a shot was fired from our bow piece, and the commanding officers took the chiefs by the hand. Captain Lewis, though an interpreter, delivered a speech, gave a suit of clothes to each of the chiefs and some articles for their villages. He also sent a suit to the chief of the Gros Ventres. At three o'clock another gun was fired at the breaking up of the council, and they all appeared satisfied. Captain Lewis gave an iron mill to the Mandan nation to grind their corn, with which they were highly pleased.

"Tuesday, 30th. We remained here to know the answer of the Indians. At ten Captain Lewis, with a party of our people and an Indian or two, went about six miles up the river to view an island, in order to ascertain whether or not it would suit for

1: DeLand O-4 (No date)1908 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

winter quarters. At five p. m. they returned and were of opinion that it was not an eligible place.

"Wednesday, 31st. A pleasant morning. We remained here also today, the Indians having given no answer. At 12, Captain Clarke and some of the men went down to the village, and the chief gave nine or ten bushels of corn, and some buffalo robes.

"Thursday, 1st November, 1804. At three o'clock p. m. we returned down the river to look for a place where we could fix our winter quarters. At dark we had ascended nine miles, and came to a bottom covered with cottonwood, where we encamped.

"Friday, 2nd. Captain Lewis, myself and some of the men went up to the first village of the Mandans, who gave us some corn. Captain Clarke and the rest of our party, having dropped half a mile lower down the river, began to clear a place for a camp and a fort. We pitched our tents and laid the foundation of one line of huts.

Fort Mandan. "Saturday, 3rd. A clear day. We continued building. The following is the manner in which our huts and forts were built. The huts were in two rows, containing four rooms each, and joined at one end forming an angle. When raised about seven feet high a floor of puncheons or split plank were laid, and covered with grass and clay, which made a warm loft. The upper part projected a foot over and the roofs were made shed-fashion, rising from the inner side and making the outer wall about eighteen feet high. The part not inclosed by the huts we intended to picket. In the angle formed by the two rows of huts we built two rooms for holding our provisions and stores.

"From the 20th to the 27th, we had fine pleasant weather, and on the evening of the latter finished the roofs of our huts. These were made of puncheons split out of cottonwood and then hewed. The cottonwood resembles the lombardy poplar, and is a light soft wood. The largest trees are in thickness about eighteen inches diameter.

The Sioux. "Thursday, 29th. Early in the morning of this day we saw an Indian on the opposite side of the river, and brought him over. He informed us that a few days ago eight of his nation were out hunting and were attacked by a party of the Sioux tribe, who killed one and wounded two more, and also

1: DeLand O-4 (No date)1908 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

These are now supplied to the trade under the name of California shells. Ten years ago, one of these shells, unpolished, sold for a good robe. There is little doubt that they used Abalone, Dentalium, and other sea shells before the traders brought them. Old traders and old Indians say so. Even as late as 1833, it would seem that they had not yet become a regular part of a trader's outfit; for Maximilian says of the Mandans: 'They do not disfigure the bodies; only they make some apertures in the outer rim of the ear, in which they hang strings of beads, brass, or iron rings of different sizes, or shells, the last of which they obtain from other Indian tribes. If they are questioned respecting these shells, they answer that they were brought from the sea." (p. 28.)

Matthews quotes the following expressions from D. D. Mitchell, found in Schoolcraft's work, concerning visitors to the Mandans in the eighteenth century:

McIntosh's Early Visit. "In a letter published in Schoolcraft's **Information Respecting the Indian Tribes,** the writer, D. D. Mitchell, says, speaking of the Mandans: 'The early portion of their history I gather from the narration of Mr. McIntosh, who, it seems, belonged to, or was in some way connected with, the French trading company as far back as 1772. According to his narration, he set out from Montreal in the summer of 1773, crossing over the country to the Missouri river, and arrived at one of the Mandan villages on Christmas day.' I have never seen McIntosh's account, nor have I seen any more extensive notice of it than the one given by Mr. Mitchell; and from this, it does not appear that McIntosh visited any of these agricultural Indians except the Mandans." (p. 29.)

And Matthews expresses the view that British and French traders and interpreters were among the Mandans prior to 1804, all of which appears in evidence hereinbefore submitted. He believes the earliest Europeans to reach them were from Hudson Bay territory, but he was, as he admits (p. 29), unaware of Verendrye's expedition referred to by Catlin, who is criticised by Matthews for failing to "tell us where the account of the expedition of 1738 is to be found," adding: "No other mention of the journey has ever been seen by me."

Matthews thus refers to the peaceable relations nearly always existing between the Mandans and Rees and the Americans:

1: DeLand O-4 (No date)1908 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

•648 **Peaceable With Americans—Government Neglect.** "During a short period of their history, the Aricarees were at war with the Americans; but for many years they have strictly maintained peace, and have fought with us and against our enemies. The Mandans and Minnetarees claim never to have shed a white man's blood, although some of their number have been killed by whites. For their fidelity they have been repaid in starvation and neglect. [165] Many of these friendly Indians, particularly among the Aricarees, have during the past ten years, died of actual hunger or the diseases incident to a state of famine. Within the past three years there seem to be some evidences of increased legislative interest in them, but the benefits arising therefrom are by no means equal to their needs or their deserts." (p. 31-32.)

142 **Complexion—Hidatsa and Mandan.** "The majority of the Hidatsa have the ordinary dusky Indian complexion, which is, however, not of a uniform shade, as far as I have seen in any tribe. There are none of this nation that would be considered dark for Indians. Among various tribes of western Indians may be found individuals, claiming pure aboriginal blood, who possess complexions much fairer than the average Indian, with light-colored hair and eyes. Such individuals are more common among the Mandans and Minnetarees than they are among most of the neighboring tribes. A natural or inherited clearness of complexion, too, is more easily discernable among members of the village tribes than among members of roving bands who are more exposed to the weather. The presence of pale Indians in these tribes was noted by travelers in early days, before intermarriages with whites were common enough to have accounted for it."

Mandans' Fair Skin. "Lewis and Clarke and Gass notice this fairness when speaking of the Mandans only, but their remarks are general. Catlin speaks of the fairness of the Mandans only, and supposes this peculiarity to arise from some pre-Columbian infusion of European blood. The Prince of Neuwied, who visited these tribes but one year later than Mr. Catlin, denies that the Mandans are of fairer complexion than their neighbors, while he asserts, at the same time, that, 'after a thorough ablution, the skin of some of them appears almost white.' I have heard old Mandans say that when the Minnetarees, including the Crows, first came among them, the strangers were a fairer race than they.

2: Bowers E-5 (1930-1931)1950 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

forms with rotted sections of the cover still protruding to gently rounded depressions now nearly filled by erosional activity. The number of pits, together with their wide distribution, points to a universal practice of considerable antiquity.

During the century 1770–1870 there was a general northward movement of the Mandan and Hidatsa which was accompanied

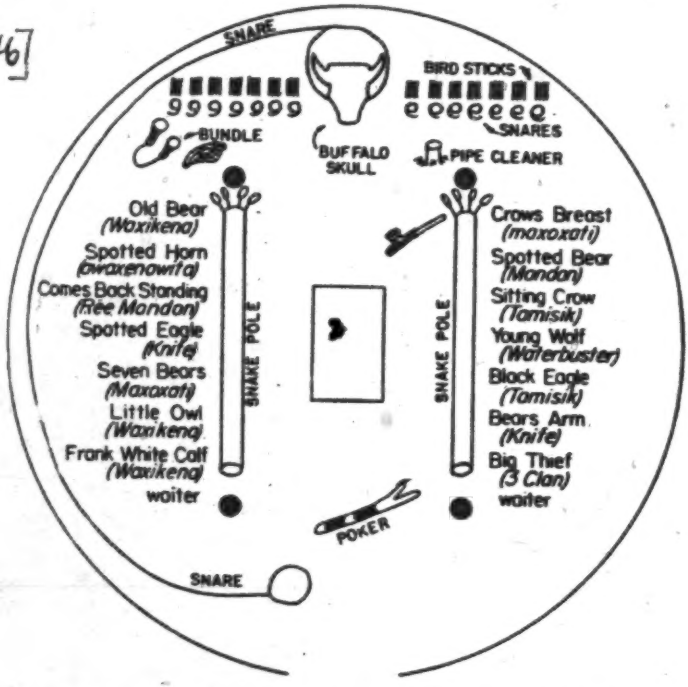

FIG. 26.—Floor plan of eagle-trapping lodge, Old Bear, leader. Bird sticks: *1*, "Both Ends White"; *2*, "Speckled"; *3*, "Four Stripes"; *4*, "The Young One."

by a shift in eagle-trapping territory. Crows Heart (Mandan), who had been on many trapping expeditions with both Mandan and Hidatsa leaders, stated that the Mandan claimed eagle-trapping rights to the territory on both sides of the Missouri River from Like-a-Fishhook Village to the Yellowstone and along the Little Missouri River to its headwaters. While living in the Heart River region, the Mandan claimed trapping rights to all the rough lands between the Little and Big Missouri rivers as far west as Powder River in Montana. To the south

2: Bowers E-5 (1930-1931)1950 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

796 223 167 648

they trapped along the Cannonball River and in the Black Hill region, especially along the north side, which was jointly occupied with the Cheyenne, whom he believed used the same methods and followed the same rituals. He had heard the old men say that it was understood that the eagle-trapping season should not be marked by bloodshed between the two tribes, or the trappers would have bad luck, and that their camps were often only a short distance apart. There would be visiting between camps and good-natured joking about the potency of their respective bundles. He further added that, through misfortune, the Mandan died off in such large numbers that they were obliged to relinquish most of their territory and establish a new territory which Hidatsa leaders had relinquished through simultaneous misfortunes. He had also heard the old men say that before abandoning the Cannonball region the Arikara, who then lived as far north as the Grand River to the south, had a similar treaty with the Sioux not to fight during the eagle-trapping season and at that time began to come into Mandan territory to make trouble. Since one was not permitted to carry his weapons to the pit,[4] a practice observed until trapping was abandoned a few years ago, the Mandan decided that it would be best to abandon their Cannonball River sites. New sites were established in Hidatsa trapping territory after the Mandan moved from the Heart River region to join the Hidatsa. Crows Heart had often visited the Crows and had heard them say they preferred to shoot the young birds, while still near their nesting places, to sitting in pits. There was also a period when the Snake Indians bothered the trappers, but he thought that it was not so long ago, as the Indians had horses by that time.[5]

A few leaders went to the east side of the Missouri River while occupying the Heart River region. Pits were dug as far east as Dog Den Butte and around Devils Lake. This was a limited territory since, in general, the country was too flat on the east side of the Missouri for successful trapping.

796 223 425 614

Ownership of a site was vested in the leader who had either purchased the lodge and adjacent pits from a man of his own

4. This practice suggests that a truce between tribes was quite universal before the introduction of the horse.

5. No doubt he referred to a recent eastward movement of Shoshonean-speaking groups after the appearance of the horse on the Northern Plains.

3: Will and Spinden E-5 (1905) 1906
NQ17 Mandan NQ17

648 Among a number of other customs, was treaty making with other tribes. This was well described by Henry who accompanied the Mandans and Hidatsa when they went to make a treaty with the Cheyennes. Most of the people went on these treaty visits; the band marched in a procession of fixed order and a number of ceremonial objects were carried exposed throughout the march. The party was met with great ceremony by the new allies and its members were taken into their houses. Several days of ceremonial feasting occurred and finally the head chief of each party adopted a son from the other tribe. After this there was more feasting and several days of trade between the two bands, when both returned home.

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[439]

597 The adoption of sons occurred also among the different families. Maximilian describes the adoption of a "medicine son" to whom a sacred pipe was given. The man chose his adopted son through a dream. The new pipe was consecrated and gifts were showered upon the son's family by the adopted father and his relatives. A dance and feast was then held. This custom was prevalent over all the Missouri region.

838 There were a number of men who dressed and acted like women and were treated in every way as such. These men claimed to follow this life by an order from the spirits given to them in a dream.

567 Catlin says that the Mandans did not have slaves and there is no mention of them elsewhere. The Arikara, however, had a regular slavery system, and the Crows made slaves and sold them on the Missouri. The Mandans were very good at the sign language so Maximilian tells us. They were expert swimmers, and collected their whole supply of wood by swimming out and towing in the drift wood at the time of the spring break-ups.

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511 In point of general culture the Mandans were superior to any of their immediate neighbors, surpassing even the other sedentary people, the Hidatsa and Arikara. Catlin says that they had advanced far in the arts of manufacture and had more comforts and luxuries than other tribes. When Verendrye saw them he, too, was struck by their superior skill. He said that the Mandans dressed leather and worked in feathers better

LIFE AMONG THE MANDANS EIGHTY YEARS AGO.

[Continued from page 253.]

FORMER RELATIONS OF PAWNEES[1] AND MANDANS.

175
●648 Not many years ago the Pawnees and Mandans were allied to each other, and lived together in the same villages, which were situated on the banks of the river Missouri, about thirty leagues below. A misunderstanding happening to occur amongst them they separated, the Pawnees retired down the river and built their village where it stands at present (A. D. 1806), and the Mandans proceeded with an intention of settling themselves somewhere about the confluence of the Little Missouri river, or on the upper part of Reviere La Souris (Moose river). But on their arrival at this place the Big Bellies barred the road, and put a stop to their progress to the westward, telling them that they would not permit them, or any one, to build higher up the river, and desiring the Mandans to build where they are at present. The latter, it seems were not much inclined to comply, but dreading the displeasure of the others who were more numerous, comprised, then, of a village of nine hundred huts, necessity obliged them to accept the terms. Since that period the Pawnees and Mandans have frequently been at war, and as often made peace again. They are a stationary people as the Mandans, and cultivate the ground in the same manner;

1[Henry[2] probably mistakes Pawnee for Arikara--Analyst]

[pp. 254 to 377 have no information on the Mandan]

[p. 377]

10: Neill 44(no date) 1884 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

175 they are represented as a treacherous, deceitful people, always
648 taking advantage of their neighbors, and favoring the Sioux
when they come to war this way, and frequently intermix with
them to annoy the Mandans and Big Bellies.

SIGN LANGUAGE.

201 This language is entirely different from the natives of this place, and it is only by signs that they usually communicate with each other, excepting a few among them who understand each other's language. It serves as interpreter upon any affair of importance. It is surprising how dexterous all these natives of the plains are, in the art of communicating their ideas by signs. They will hold conference, for several hours together, upon different subjects, and during the whole time not a single word will be pronounced upon either side, and still they appear to comprehend each other perfectly well. This mode of communication appears to be quite natural to them, other difficult events are performed with the greatest ease and readiness. They never seem to be at loss, or in want of a sign to express their meaning.

COURTESY TO STRANGERS.

648 Soon after our arrival, there was a great uproar occasioned
721 by the unexpected visit of six Pawnees, from their own vil-
728 lage, sixty leagues below this, on the banks of the same (Missouri) river. They were sent upon an embassy to treat for peace. It appears that last spring, some of these people had accompanied a war party of Sioux who came here and killed five Mandans. The latter nation, in company with the Big Bellies (Gros Ventres,) soon after returned the visit, and not finding the Sioux, on their return killed two Pawnees, but this did not satisfy them. They had informed the Pawnees that they might expect a more formal visit the ensuing fall; that both the Mandans and Big Bellies were determined to exterminate every Pawnee they could find, and lay their villages even with the ground.

To avoid this storm, the latter thought prudent to sue for
[202] peace. A messenger was instantly dispatched to the upper villages to give information of their arrival. In the meantime the strangers were very hospitably entertained, conducted into a hut, and presented with corn and beans, dried meats, etc. All were now silent for some time, awaiting the determination of the Big Bellies.

ARRIVAL OF GROS VENTRES.

The Big Bellies[1] in a short time, arrived on horse-back; about thirty men came down full speed; they brought down an inter-

1 [Category 116, p. 335.—A.]

10: Neill H-H(no date) 1884 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

preter with them. They did not appear well pleased, and looked on the Pawnees with an eye of disdain. After some conversation they desired the Pawnees to return immediately to their own villages, and to inform their great war chief, Red Tail, that if he sincerely wished for peace, he must come up and then they would settle matters, as they were determined to have nothing to do with young men. They allowed two moons to consider upon the business, and perform the journey. If, at the end of that time, the Chief did not make his appearance, they would immediately gather up their corn, and in a body, go and find him out, in his own village, and convince him what Big Bellies (or as they call themselves Willow Indians), and Mandans could do when exasperated by the treacherous conduct of the Pawnees.

The six embassies promised to depart early next morning to inform their Chief, who they answer no doubt, would very soon wait upon them. Thus ended an affair, which at the commencement we supposed would conclude with the death of the strangers, by the great bustle and noise their arrival occasioned.

But I was afterwards informed that of such proceedings there was not the least danger; that the natives of this place make it a particular point of honor to protect every stranger who throws himself upon them and begs their clemency. Even their natural and most inveterate enimies, the Sioux, have been known to come into their villages unexpectedly, and were always received with hospitality, and well entertained during thei stay which by the way, they never permit to be more than one night when they are dismissed, and allowed to return to their own homes unmolested.

A HUNTING PARTY.

Towards the evening there was a whooping and howling among the young men who were standing upon their huts. This, it seems, was to announce the appearance of a hunting party of the Mandans, who were just at that moment appearing upon the tops of the high bank to the south, and descending by a well-beaten road towards the village. The party consisted of about one hundred men on horseback, and each loaded with half a buffalo; some of them had even more, according to the strength of their horses, and the master will always ride, be his beast ever so loaded. They had been away since yesterday and found buffalo in great abundance near at hand. These people never go out hunting unless in large parties. The continual danger from their enemies obliges them to be very cautious; another reason is, that when the buffalo comes near at hand, they are anxious to prevent them from being driven away. For this purpose, it is customary for them all, in a body, to surround one herd only, which sometimes consists of several hundreds.

832 repair to the cornfields and are soon followed by the young men,
834 who enjoy their company and take every liberty. The young
men then return, and, if no hunting party offers, pass the day on
461 the tops of the huts, sleeping in the sun, or strolling from hut to
526 hut, eating corn and smoking Missourie tobacco. At other times
they amuse themselves by running races either on foot or horseback,
and performing warlike manoeuvres; they have also a favorite
game which occupies much of their time.

512 [328] . . . this is the first work performed by the women in the
515 morning after having paid their devoirs to their lovers and washed
themselves in the Missourie. . . . every family being provided
415 with a brass or copper kettle for the purpose of cooking flesh.
177 Whether this proceeds from superstition or not I cannot pretend to
771 say, but they assured me that any kind of flesh cooked in those
574 earthen pots would cause them to split. One or more of the largest
kind is constantly boiling prepared corn and beans, and all who come
in are welcome to help themselves to as much as they can eat of the
contents.

231 . . . . . Early this morning our young hostler took our horses to feed
437 in the meadow but never allowed them to be for a moment out of
● 648 his sight, lest the Assiniboines or other enemies might steal them.
We purchased sweet corn, beans, meal, and various other trifles,
for which we paid in ammunition, beads, and tobacco.

439 [329] It would have been in vain for us to attempt to prevail
upon anyone in this village to ferry us over; for, as long as a stranger
has any property, they wish him to trade all he brings in the first
village he enters, every village being ambitious of getting as many
439 European articles as they can, [330] particularly arms and ammuni-
609 tion. This is good policy; for, notwithstanding they are so near each
other, and live in amity, they are not free from jealousy, and have
578 often had serious misunderstandings, sometimes ending in the death
569 of an individual, and nearly occasioning civil war. They have also
to guard against their natural enemies, the Sioux, who are at no great
distance. The Pawnees, also, with whom the Mandanes formerly
lived in the same villages, are now their most inveterate enemies.
Arms and ammunition are, therefore, necessary articles, and every-
one has a stock of ball and powder laid up in case of emergency.

675 We packed up our purchases, and gave them into the care of the
673 landlord. These people are much given to thieving, but in the hut
[577] in which a stranger is lodged, his property may be left in perfect
security; none dare touch it, as the master conceives his honor
concerned in whatever is placed under his immediate protection.
Out of doors, if they can pick your pocket, or pilfer any article,

574 609 277 any expectation of payment. Being almost destitute of tobacco for our journey, he gave us some of their own manufacture. As that herb is not yet arrived at maturity, they use only the blossoms [402] at present. These are collected as required, dried before the fire on a fragment of an earthen pot, and smoked by all the natives. But I find the flowers a very poor substitute for our own tobacco—a nauseous, insipid weed. The ripe leaf is somewhat better, but even that is mere trash, possessed of neither strength nor virtue.

●648 [491] [137] [403] We soon after took the road, bidding a final adieu to the Mandanes. The road through the wood was very muddy and bad. We found amazing quantities of poires, perfectly ripe. The natives here are so surrounded by their different enemies at all seasons, and particularly when the fruit is ripe, that the women dare not leave the villages to gather it, though there is a great plenty of chokecherries, cerises, etc. Even when they go out to hoe their corn, young men, well armed, keep on the rounds at short distances from the women to prevent surprise from an enemy. This is a necessary precaution, as they have frequently been attacked while working in the fields. The village on the N. side lies under a double disadvantage, surrounded by thick woods for nearly two miles upon the land side, and having close by a vast quantity of young sprouts and brushwood, enabling an enemy to approach very near without being discovered. A single Sioux has been known to secrete himself for several days among those bushes until a favorable opportunity has offered, when he has dispatched a Mandane, and got away with the scalp.

[p. 384 [I]]